

What will happen at hospital?

You will be given the fluids you need though a drip in your arm. This will be continued until you are able to drink fluids without vomiting. Each day your fluid intake and how much urine you are passing will be recorded.

Your temperature, blood pressure, pulse, respiratory rate and weight will also be recorded.

You should be offered:

- anti-sickness medication and a B vitamin called thiamine; both of these can be given through the drip in your arm if you are unable to keep tablets down
- special stockings (graduated elastic compression stockings) to help prevent blood clots

When you are feeling better, you can start to drink and eat small amounts and slowly build up to a normal diet.

Further information:

- [Nausea and Vomiting in Pregnancy \[NVP\] - Hyperemesis Gravidarum \[HG\] | Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District \(ISLHD\) \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
- [Maternity and Women's Health ISLHD](#)

Key Points

- Nausea and vomiting of pregnancy is a common condition that usually settles by 12 to 14 weeks of pregnancy
- Hyperemesis Gravidarum is a severe form of nausea and vomiting
- Nausea and vomiting and Hyperemesis Gravidarum can affect: your mood, your work, your home situation and your ability to care for your family. Extra support from family, friends and healthcare professionals can help you
- A variety of anti-sickness medicines are available that may help your symptoms
- Seek help early if you have severe nausea and vomiting and are unable to keep fluids down
- You may need to go to hospital for medication if you remain unwell.

Need an Interpreter? Professional interpreters are available if you need help to communicate with staff. Our staff can also ask for an interpreter. The service is free and confidential. We will book the interpreter for you. You can also call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 if you need to speak to us before your appointment.



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Maternity and Women's Health

HYPEREMESIS GRAVIDARUM

Severe nausea and vomiting during pregnancy



Health
Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District

What is Hyperemesis Gravidarum (HG)?

Nausea and vomiting during pregnancy affects most women in some way. It begins early in pregnancy, most commonly between the 4th and 7th week but usually settles by 12 to 14 weeks, although in some women it may last longer. It is often called 'morning sickness' but it can occur at any time of the day or night.

If the nausea and vomiting becomes so severe that it may lead to dehydration and significant weight loss, it is known as hyperemesis gravidarum (HG).

Signs of dehydration include feeling 'dry' or very thirsty, becoming drowsy or unwell, or passing dark coloured or less urine. Women with this condition may need to be admitted to hospital.

In severe cases, vomiting can last up to 20 weeks. Sometimes, it can last until the end of pregnancy.

How will it make me feel?

Nausea and vomiting in pregnancy can be hard to cope with. It can affect your mood, your work, your home life and your ability to care for your family. Support from family and friends can help.

In some women, the symptoms can be so severe that they become depressed and need extra support such as counselling.

If you find that you persistently feel down, speak to your healthcare professional.

What are the signs and symptoms?

These include:

- Prolonged and severe nausea and vomiting (more than three or four times a day)
- Inability to keep down food or water
- Weight loss
- Excessive tiredness and dizziness
- Passing dark coloured and less urine
- Experiencing headaches and rarely confusion
- Dizziness and fainting
- Pounding heart
- Blood is seen sometimes in the vomit
- Trouble swallowing saliva
- Skin becoming pale and dry.

Will it harm my baby?

There is no evidence that nausea and vomiting has a harmful effect on your baby.

Women with severe nausea and vomiting or with hyperemesis gravidarum may have a baby with a lower than expected birthweight.

You may be offered scans to watch the growth of your baby.

What treatment options are available?

See your doctor if you are:

- experiencing severe symptoms of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy and
- unable to keep down fluids.

Your healthcare provider will create a care plan just for you based off an assessment of your symptoms.

This may include: changes in diet, rest, more support, oral medications, help with fluids and food within the hospital system.

Will I need to go to hospital?

You may have to stay at hospital if you:

- are dehydrated
- have severe nausea and vomiting and are unable to tolerate any fluids
- have abnormal blood tests
- have lost weight
- have a medical condition such as a heart or kidney problem or diabetes.

The aim is to:

- Correct dehydration
- Break the cycle of vomiting that leads to dehydration
- Ensure there is no other medical problem that could be causing the nausea and vomiting.